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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between the study of management and the study of higher education (HE) management in the United Kingdom, focusing on the nature of the discourse between academics in the two fields. The paper has three parts. The first part defines the nature of discourse and a context for the discussion, looking at recent changes in HE and its management in the United Kingdom. This is followed by an analogous overview of British research into HE management and a review of the complex issues facing business and management research and the discord that exists in defining its rigor and relevance. The second part of the paper considers the nature of academic discourses; how disciplines, fields, faculties, and cultures are developed; and how they interact or not interact with each other. The third part explores the relationship between theory and practice in HE management and the extent to which management academics engage with the study of management in their own work context. A model is developed to express the inter-relationship between management research, HE management research, and HE management practice. The paper concludes by questioning how far the divisions articulated between the two fields are simply part of an inevitable language game between the disciplines. (Contains 104 references.) (MDM)

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Higher Education and Management: Discourse and Discord

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Higher Education and Management: Discourse and Discord

In the past 20 years UK higher education (HE) has expanded rapidly and the study of management has expanded even faster. But the study of HE management remains a fringe activity practised by only a handful of British academics. Although there have been some incursions by general management academics into the field of higher education, these have so far been largely stopovers rather than extended visits. The 'visiting' academics and the vehicles for their discourse also seem to come from a base in radical or critical management theory. Although HE management academics draw to some extent on the wider management literature, their work seems to make little or limited impact upon the wider field. It appears that the two areas of work have separate communities of scholars and separate discourses, with a relatively limited communication and interchange between them, despite what may be seen as apparently common interests. This separation is particularly curious and interesting because it is a peculiarly British phenomenon and because most of the academics in both fields work alongside each other in the same institutions.

This paper sets out to examine this phenomenon through the separate discourses and the silence or discord between them, to explore what they reveal about the nature of disciplines and boundaries in higher education and the implications for discourse, for theory and for HE management practice . Discourse is taken as the overarching framework for the discussion as it embraces the language, knowledge, power and social embeddedness of academic practices and communities of scholars.

The paper is in three parts. The first part defines the nature of discourse and a context for the discussion, looking at recent changes in HE and its management. This is followed by a review of the complex issues facing business and management research and the discord that exists in defining its rigour and relevance, before an analogous overview of British research into HE management. The second part of the paper considers the nature of academic discourses, how disciplines, fields, faculties and cultures are developed and how they interact or not with each other. Section three explores the relationship between theory and practice in HE management and the extent to which management academics engage with the study of management in their own work context . A model is developed to express the inter-relationship between management research, HE management research and HE management practice. The conclusions question how far the divisions articulated are simply part of an inevitable language game (Wittgenstein 1974) between the disciplines and speculates about those differences in relation to British and American practice.

Framing The Discourse

The concept of discourse is normally associated with Foucault, who defined discourse not simply as a 'way of seeing' but as always embedded in social practices which reproduce that way of seeing as the 'truth' of the discourse (Knights and Morgan 1991). This is why Foucault (1980) argues that power and knowledge are inseparable: knowledge through its creation reproduces particular discursive practices. Taking this view encourages us to compare the discourse of management and the discourse of education management to

determine their differing social practices and 'truths', to consider how far these discourses are related in the world of academia and practice, and to assess their relative power.

Gee and Lankshear (1995:11) define discourse with a "capital D" as a means to provide insight into " the ways of thinking, believing, acting and interacting, speaking, listening and valuing ...to signal membership in a particular social group". Their view implies that sites of social practice, like universities, often bring together people from very different discursive traditions. When this happens, meanings that are socially constructed (Berger and Luckmann 1967) and embedded may become contested in ways that have social, political and moral implications. As Fairclough (1992:3) said: " Discourses do not just reflect or represent social entities and relations, they construct and constitute them". In this paper we are not trying to capture the 'reality' that exists, rather we are also part of the construction process as this paper itself comes into being.

Being 'in' with one group may also mean being 'out' with others as the power effects of discourse are always open to resistance (Foucault 1980). Consequently discourse can be seen as dynamic as it embraces a multitude of power-knowledge relationships which are communicated and embedded in social practices. In Foucault's (1984 :110) words:

"Discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination but is the thing for which and by which there is a struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized"

Discourse is the site of power struggles and conflict (Fairclough 1992) as some actors may lose or gain from the use of the discourse. Also, while some may want to promote a discourse, others may want to dissolve it (Parker 1992). Phillips and Hardy (1997) reinforce these views by framing power as a network of discourse relations capturing the advantaged and disadvantaged alike in its web, drawing attention to how the subject is socially constructed by the system of power that surrounds it (Knights 1992) and its own politics of truth (Foucault 1980). Power is therefore exercised by modifying the discourse, which becomes the focus or locale for struggle and conflict. Applying this discourse framework leads to a number of significant questions: what are the origins of a particular discourse? which groups or institutions are supporting and constructing it? with whom are they communicating (or not)? and who is struggling to change it and for what purpose? Using a power/ relations perspective also illuminates the structure of the discourse and its implications and consequences. For example, is the management discourse 'dominant' compared to HE management? If so, what are the implications of this for both groups and for the development of practice?

Keenoy et al (1997) provide a valuable typology with their distinction between monological and dialogical discourse . Where there is a dominant group, discourse is invariably monological - 'one story viewed from the perspective of a dominant group' (Boje 1995:1029). Although a monologue need not be restricted to one group or set of views it must be coherent. Dialogical discourse is different as it recognises and legitimises multiple meanings, independent voices and autonomous discourses which can make up a plurality of meanings and interpretations. Dialogical discourse recognises and embraces a post-modern approach to 'plurivocal' interpretations.

The final part of the discourse framework turns to an important part of sense making that is often left out or forgotten, the space that exists both within and between discourses - silence. The sound of silence may be as deafening as any scream - yet often it is ignored or brushed over as a 'gap', an invisible space or a pause as in speech, punctuation or white space as in a

written text. Yet what is unwritten or unsaid may be more powerful and provide greater insights into the nature of discourse than that which appears. An earlier paper (Thorne 1996) used silence to make sense of why 'new university' Business Schools did not have a voice in management research in the UK. Willmott (1994) also tries to interpret and make sense of the silence of UK academics in the face of major criticisms of management education. Deliberate silence can be interpreted in a variety of ways, from aggression to lack of interest. A silent group may believe they have the 'right to remain silent' (Thorne 1996) or may consider an argument unworthy of debate. Davis (1971) suggests three possible reasons for groups not interacting or engaging in dialogical discourse: (i) they fail to be interested in what the other group is saying because of the relationship to the other's assumptions; (ii) from the others' point of view, what they are saying is absurd (it is a denial of their assumptive ground); (iii) it is irrelevant (it fails to speak to their assumptive ground) or it is obvious (it repeats their assumptive ground). Colville (1997) uses Davis' categories to argue that these three categories produce 'claptrap' - which is obvious, absurd or irrelevant. His use of 'claptrap' is an interesting device as the term can mean either pouring scorn on other people's ideas or a trick or language device to stimulate applause, an approach often used by skilled orators and politicians. Either example is revealing.

The Changing Face of British Higher Education: a Contextual View

British higher education has been transformed in the last 30 years, a period punctuated by national committees of inquiry into higher education, known after their chairmen Lord Robbins and Sir Ron Dearing. The Robbins Report (1963) heralded rapid expansion and the creation in the 1960s of the 'binary' system of universities, on the one hand, and polytechnics and colleges of higher education on the other. The expansion in the 1960s and 1970s was predominantly in the polytechnics, which by the 1990s provided the majority of undergraduate education. The polytechnics' growing independence from their local government origins eventually led to a change in 1988 from local to national funding and control. The two national sectors of HE converged rapidly until they were formally merged and, in 1992, polytechnics were allowed to adopt university titles. By the late 1990s more than one third of each rising generation entered full-time undergraduate HE at the age of 18 or 19, and many more continued in full-time or part-time further education. In less than 30 years the UK system had shifted from elite to mass, in Trow's (1970) typology, and was moving towards a 'universal' system with a participation rate of more than 50%.

For the purposes of our analysis we will focus on three aspects: changes in the institutional locations of higher education; changes in the scale and pattern of higher education programmes; and the emergence in the conduct of the HE sector of hotly contested notions of 'management'. Each of these aspects of change affects the distribution of power in HE and the way in which HE practice is socially embedded in disciplinary and institutional contexts. Each poses fundamental challenges and dilemmas for our understanding of the nature of the HE experience, the nature of the university, and how (and whether) we should conceive of the university as being 'managed' at all.

The binary system and the British polytechnic 'experiment' (Pratt 1997) fostered the development of new kinds of subject and new approaches to teaching and learning. It changed the British HE landscape in ways which Pratt analyses in detail. One aspect of this was the very uneven growth in different subjects. In particular, the development of HE in the polytechnics

meant the rapid expansion of business and management studies as a distinctive new area of undergraduate study, which accounted for 35% of all HE students in polytechnics by 1987 (Pratt 1997:54). Business and management were the largest element of the polytechnics' more vocational and applied undergraduate curriculum, which then became taken up by the 'old' universities, and are now the most populous area of the overall HE curriculum.

This same period saw the development of a British community of academic researchers in business and management located predominantly in the old universities, in newly-formed departments of management or business schools. This old university-based research community continues to have the dominant voice in the conduct of business and management research, as is shown particularly in the periodic national Research Assessment Exercises (RAEs) conducted by the HE Funding Councils for England, Scotland and Wales. However the development of different streams of business and management study in old and new universities poses a fundamental dilemma about the 'proper' scope and nature of management research. This dilemma remains unresolved, not least because the debate between different perspectives is muted by their unequal power (Thorne 1996) in the supposedly unified HE research domain.

Beyond this debate, and the seismic shifts in the disciplinary landscape, lie broader questions about the nature of research, its relationship to teaching (Scott 1995), the balance between the two, and thus about the nature of the university itself. The ending of the binary system has highlighted that, in the words of a former chairman of the national funding body for polytechnics, 'more means different' (Ball 1990).

The Robbins Committee provided a classic formulation of the purposes of HE. But that formulation allows not only for the 'research-teaching-study nexus' eulogised by Trow (1994) and nurtured in the old universities, but also for newer forms of academic organisation and approaches which are embedded in particular in new universities. However since unification of the UK university sector there has been both convergence and divergence of institutional practices, so that the 'old' and 'new' university labels are no longer reliable guides to the nature of the discourses within their subsidiary units (Thorne and Cuthbert 1996). In the late 1990s the fundamental issue, acknowledged but unresolved by the Dearing Committee, is: what is a university?

Related to this dilemma is the issue of what is variously conceived as governance, leadership, administration and management. The classic British 'old university' account of 'power and authority in British universities' argues that the university is and should be governed as an academic republic (Moodie and Eustace 1974). This is congruent (Cuthbert 1981) with the classic US notions of the loosely coupled academy (Weick 1976) and the university as an organised anarchy (Cohen and March 1974). Berdahl (1983) and Shattock (1994) have described the political autonomy of old universities under the University Grants Committee. This autonomy, and the relatively resource-rich environments of the period up to the 1980s, formed the context in which ideas of the self-governing academic republic and the 'invisible' unbounded academic community of the discipline could dominate discourse about the conduct of higher education. In this discourse 'academic leadership' was to the fore, with 'administration' as a necessary underpinning (in the sense of administrators as a university civil service, not 'educational administrators' as understood by a North American audience).

In the 1980s 'management' burst into this arena with an impact which was, and remains, shocking to many committed to the classic values. The polytechnics had grown up in the binary system as institutions which had always been more 'socially responsive' (Crosland 1965, 1967;

Robinson 1968), which meant, *inter alia*, more tightly governed and managed. The further education tradition from which the polytechnics emerged encompassed both the college principal with strong executive authority and the college governing body with a majority of elected local politicians (Locke et al 1987, Pratt 1997). Polytechnics became large and increasingly independent organisations just as the British political climate during Margaret Thatcher's premiership shifted in favour of national over local government control. This swept away the local control of governance, but was accompanied by the new right ideology which favoured businesslike approaches to public service management. Polytechnics became independent corporations funded by a new national body, with new boards on which business people were in the majority. In this context the persistence of 'management' as a dominant construct in the discourse of polytechnic governance was only to be expected.

HE expansion was accompanied by continuing reduction in the levels of funding per student, and changes in teaching and learning, especially the modularisation of the undergraduate curriculum, which gave institutional managers more scope to influence the development of their institutions (Cuthbert 1997). In the 1980s national committees reviewed institutional management and governance in universities (the Jarratt Report: CVCP 1985) and in polytechnics (NAB 1987); both argued for the strengthening of 'management' at institutional level. This was reinforced by the reformed national funding agencies, which demanded that each institution produce a strategic plan with an underpinning strategic management process. In the polytechnics - the new universities - this was a natural evolution; in the old universities it often appeared as a radical departure. However, resource restrictions forced a degree of convergence, both in the attitudes of senior 'managers', as they were increasingly described, and the attitudes of many staff, who bridled either at the resource cuts, or the increasing managerialism, or both. The combined effect of the changes in governance, resourcing and curriculum was a shift in power within the institutions. The power of central managers increased at the expense of heads of departments and individual academics, and the number of academic staff working as full-time managers increased, at both institutional and departmental levels.

Part of this expansion of the managerial cadre flowed from new approaches to teaching and learning. Modularisation of the curriculum and mass participation cast academics as managers of a learning process supported by a team of technical officers, teaching assistants, course administrators and others occupying roles which would have been alien to previous academic generations. The greater complexity and interdependence of academic programmes also expanded the number of managerial roles.

In other public services there has been an equivalent expansion in management, but in education, unlike the health service, there has not been a marked influx of general managers from outside the academic professions. HE managers continue to be drawn from the ranks of the academics, which focuses attention on the inner dialogues needed to resolve any conflict between the worldview of the academic teacher or researcher and the perspective of the manager required to balance academic values with resource restrictions and competing demands.

In any event, the rise of management in HE has been and continues to be bitterly contested. It has led to what we describe below (see also Thorne and Cuthbert 1997) as some 'lamentation' about the loss of traditional academic values. Beyond lament comes resistance: Dearlove (1998) argues that the nature of academic work is such that "management, bureaucracy and governance can only take universities so far in the organisation of teaching and research in turbulent times that call for change and entrepreneurship" (Dearlove 1998:59). Others such as Winter (1996) argue that alongside the 'new discipline' imposed by the changes, comes an opportunity for 'new

liberty'. The debate continues to rage; it might be summed up in the question: "Can universities be managed?". Answers vary according to the answer to the question: "What is a university?". More precisely, the dilemma is whether a university should be 'managed' as a corporation rather than 'governed' as a community. This brings us to a consideration of the changing nature of management.

The Changing Nature of Management

"Management research and education in the UK and in other countries have reached a crossroad"

(George Bain 1994)

Bain's observations identify a maelstrom emerging in the area. This section describes the development of business and management research, primarily in the UK, to provide a context and comparison with HE management research and practice.

British universities, unlike their American counterparts, resisted the introduction of the study of business and management. London and Manchester Business Schools were created in 1965, 84 years after Wharton and driven by initiatives primarily outside academia. Wheatcroft (1970) argues that academics' resistance was based upon their antipathy to 'business values' and the discourse of profit and the view that management was vocational 'training' rather than education, lacking both academic content and theoretical depth. From its inception management was the site of struggle between rigour and relevance (Barry 1989).

From the 1960s and 1970s business and management education developed outside the universities in the more vocational polytechnics and colleges. A divided binary system of higher education also segmented the way the management discourse developed, particularly in research, as the polytechnics were primarily teaching institutions acting as knowledge brokers rather than generators and were relatively silent in the research discourse (Thorne 1996). Since 1965, business and management has expanded enormously in both old and new universities to become one of the dominant areas by student volume. It is also gaining in status and prestige for whilst Becher (1989) failed to include it in his seminal study of 'prestigious' disciplines and fields, Locke (1989:196) argues that anything that passes the 'Oxbridge test' (with both universities now active providers) can no longer be classed as second rate. This illustrates how the perceptions of subjects are constructed and dynamic - changing over time.

Despite its expansion and increased legitimacy there is still discord about its status as a field, and whether that field has significantly evolved. Whitley (1984: 387) argued it lacked the intellectual and coherence of a field:

"Indeed, as a field with common explanatory ideals and technical procedures it is dubious if it exists. Rather it seems to be a congery of overlapping yet disjointed topics, results and pronouncements with very little in common except a joint institutional base."

Whitley's focus on the institutional base of management provides a useful device to explore the conflicts between institutional providers and their clients A series of major reports on management education in the UK (Mangham and Silver (1987) Handy (1987) Constable and

McCormick (1987)) revealed a series of gaps and weaknesses in provision which had developed in an ad hoc way during the 1960s and 1970s (Willmott 1994). Management education, unlike management development, is normally the province of academics rather than employers, funded primarily by the government or by the individual (Thomas 1980). This model reveals a conflict between the needs and interests of the academic community (as designers and providers of management education most notably MBAs and postgraduate diplomas) the managers as clients, and also the employers of the managers. Their conflicting needs generate discord between their different discourses that question the nature of management over its purposes, focus, value and relevance.

This discord is raging openly on both sides of the Atlantic. Bain (1994) goes further to suggest that criticism is widespread as "the value and quality of some management research is being questioned by academics, funders, and users alike". Whilst one might argue the Research Councils (as funders) are hijacking the research agenda (to support rigour) Twomey and Twomey (1998) see 'lack of relevance' as a major problem. As Business Schools in both the USA and UK strive to increase their status within the academic community they become 'disconnected' from practice. The discourse within the academic has taken precedence reversing the early critical discourse of management as 'insufficiently academic'. Such findings suggest that once academics 'claim' a discourse they embed it within their own social practice making it more academic to give it status within their community but in so doing make it inaccessible to non-academic managers. Business leaders and some professors in the USA and Europe are extremely critical of this development and are advocating improved links through applied research to overcome it (Linder and Smith 1992). Yet change is unlikely if the rewards continue to be directed towards academic work published in the more theoretical and method based journals. All of the evocations will be simply shouting into the chasm that has opened up, resulting in a resounding echo rather than the creation of a new productive dialogue.

Notwithstanding the institutional discord, the 'field' itself is a site of contested meanings, where many voices are straining to be heard above the previously dominant din of positivist, or traditional functionalist 'mainstream management'. Management is not only informed by theories within academe, it also resides within a broader culture that is 'fragmented, fickle and relativistic' where 'dissonance is rife and there is very little consensus' (Hartley 1998) and conflict is inevitable:

"Take the theorists: their theories are a mix of approaches derived from functionalism, social construction, chaos theory and postmodernist theory. On the one hand there are those who point to fundamental incompatibilities among them, arguing that neither singly nor collectively can they serve as a basis for practice. On the other hand, there are those who, in their search for structure, suggest that a theoretical reconciliation is indeed possible - and necessary in order to inform management practice."

(Hartley 1998:153)

Theoretical pluralism in management discourse mirrors the diversity of contemporary society (Reed 1989) unlike the earlier mainstream management that simply reinforced existing asymmetrical power relationships inherent in socio-economic structures (Chia and Morgan 1996). Whilst diversity can lead to a healthy debate, Pfeffer argues that progress can only come from forcing consensus by "excluding views that diverge from a dominant paradigm" (Cannella and Paetzold 1994:331) and giving control to a small group of elite scholars.

Driving out 'other competing voices' by silencing their discourse through exclusion from the public domain presumes that discourse can be 'managed and controlled' in this way. His arguments have been criticised by Canella and Paetzold (1994:338) who see the challenge of existing views as the way to create and sustain an 'ongoing dialogue that is "essential to the evolution of knowledge". The newer strands of management discourses - postmodernism, critical theory and new public management - illustrate power struggles that emerge when the dominant paradigm is challenged, whilst management gurus can circumvent the academic establishment to legitimise their voice.

Postmodernists revel in plurivocal discourse and the condition of 'undecidability and perpetual re-definition" (Jeffcutt 1994:239). Instead of seeking control they invite and embrace uncertainty and ambiguity. Critical theory (CT) (see Alvesson and Willmott 1992) questions the values and the hegemony of management itself. According to Grey (1995) orthodox management education has failed in part to develop effective managers because of the intellectual inadequacies of management education programmes. He believes that a more complex and sophisticated form of analysis is required to renew management, that can only come from critiquing management "assumptions, discourses, practices and ideologies of management from a multiplicity of perspectives" (Grey and French 1996). However these new radical discourses have been marginalised in a way Grey describes as intellectually and politically unacceptable. Frost (1997:362) identifies two reasons for its lack of power. Firstly its discourse has failed to offer practical help for managers and is seen as threatening and or confusing to students. Secondly the field comprises many younger academics who lack institutional power to foster its development - this will change as they mature and gain access to key appointments.

New public management faces similar issues. It was spawned from public administration and business management to capture the fundamental restructuring of the public sector and construct new ways of understanding public management (see Le Grand and Bartlett 1993, Harrow and Wilcocks 1990, Ferlie et al 1996, Hood 1991). The explicit introduction of more 'business like' values and practices such as marketing, strategy, and quality management into the public sector gave impetus and legitimacy to management discourse and the development of new theories. However a major theme of the discourse contested the appropriateness of the ideology of 'managerialism' (Pollitt 1990) and its use in a public context. The power struggle also reflected the dispute over academic territory as management academics began to increasingly colonise an area previously occupied by specialists in social, health, government and education administration. The interest in the field also reflects the substantial funding available to research these changes, which adds to the power and prestige of both academics and institutions.

Perhaps these new areas of discourse are just part of the fashions that dominate management thinking (Kieser 1997), elevating particular ideas directly to public attention. Fashions tend to be associated with management gurus, both academics and managers. Huczynski (1993) who studied a number of gurus (including John Harvey Jones, Lee Iacocca, Henry Mintzberg, Rosabeth Moss Kanter and Michael Porter) saw gurus as important for two reasons - their impact on practice and the nature of their discourse. Gurus, unlike other academics write best-selling books and rely heavily on 'performing' for a general audience (Clark and Salaman 1996) to promote their ideas. This direct dialogue circumvents the academic refereeing process embedding their discourse in new forms of practice .

To summarise, this section has identified the multiplicity of management discourses and the discord that exists between the discourses of academics and managers and within the community of academics as positivist management theory comes under siege from postmodern and critical theory. Viewed from the mainstream or dominant perspective then the "solution" is to ignore, dismiss or silence the discourse of others, dismissing them as "claptrap" (Colville 1997) to maintain a semblance of order. Alternatively viewed from a postmodern perspective these contested and clamouring discourses are to be expected and welcomed as they mirror the cultural diversity of management, offer a more sophisticated framework for sense making and may be the road to renewal of the field. Academics failures to create a dialogue with managers reflects the greater power and status to be gained from within their own community. However an increased interest in the public services reflects both its changing nature and the funding it can provide. An alternative and powerful form of direct discourse has been created by academics and managers acting as gurus reconstructing the power relationships between their audience and their "clients". Management discourse is socially constructed to serve the purposes of the generators and primary recipients; it is diverse with a multiplicity of meanings; it may be difficult to control, even where that is desired; its meanings and value are contested by academics, practitioners, funders and clients; and it is subject to change.

British Research into Higher Education Management

In this paper we consider "British research into higher education management" to cover academic research by UK-based academics into management, organisation and policy studies of higher education. In considering the changing nature of management research we could draw on British literature which addressed that issue directly. In British HE management research there is no equivalent literature, so we must take a different approach by drawing on more indirect sources.

Despite our broad definition of 'HE management' there is relatively little work captured by such a definition. The *Research into Higher Education Abstracts* series, published by the UK-based Society for Research into Higher Education, is the only major British series in the field of research into HE. There are about 600-700 abstracts a year, purportedly a comprehensive coverage of British work and a significant proportion of European (published in English), North American and Australian research. Abstracts are organised under eight headings:

- National Systems and Comparative Studies
- Institutional Management
- Curriculum
- Research
- Students
- Staff
- Finance and Physical Resources
- Contributory Studies

Most management research falls within the first two of these, although some work under other headings would also be captured by our definition. Probably less than 200 items a year would be in "management", and of these a significant proportion would be work by non-UK based scholars. It seems that British research into HE management contributes little more than 100 items a year to the literature.

In one important respect this understates the volume of UK work. Significantly, the Abstracts consign all other disciplines - with specific mention of history, philosophy, policy studies, research design and methodologies - to the (relatively small) category of Contributory Studies. There is no mention of management *per se*, and the only management journal covered is, oddly, *Management Education and Development*. However there is a qualitatively, if not quantitatively, significant UK contribution to HE management research developing in what we will call 'mainstream' management research, published in mainstream management journals. We return to this later in our argument.

The structure of the Abstracts reveals how British HE research grew out of broader study of 'educational administration', itself a late developing area in the UK. In the UK 'educational administration' has a different meaning to its generic use in North America, carrying nuances which would normally exclude (for example) the strategic work of university vice-chancellors. Its use signifies first, its epistemological antecedents in the broader academic field of public administration, and second, its location in departments of education studies rather than departments of public administration or political science. The academic formation of many early leaders in the new field had inevitably been in another disciplinary community, such as politics (Maurice Kogan, Graeme Moodie), sociology (Beryl Tipton) and economics (Gareth Williams). These academics nevertheless came together (for the most part) in education departments, and even where they did not it was the education-based departments, conferences and journals which gave them a research focus and an opportunity to dominate the discourse.

At an early stage in the evolution of the academic field the British Society for Research into Higher Education was formed (in 1967) to bring together not only academics but also policymakers interested in HE. The nascent discourse of HE research thus built in a dialogue between research and practice, but its development maintained that dialogue (as we will argue) only at the expense of a failure to communicate fully (a) with other research discourses, and (b) perhaps also with a newly-emerging discourse of HE management within institutions. The recognisable British 'HE research community' remains very small. There are only a few key foci which enable the community to coalesce and communicate. These foci include: conferences of the SRHE; specialist journals; and some small specialist centres within universities or elsewhere.

SRHE has about 400 individual members other than students or retired members (SRHE 1997). Not all are UK-based and the individual members include a large number of (a) managers and policymakers from institutions and government; and (b) academics (teachers and researchers) interested primarily in curriculum issues, typically mainly within their own discipline. Probably less than 100 SRHE members would describe themselves as researchers into HE management, and many of those would not describe this as their full-time work.

Another estimate of scale is possible through the SRHE Register of Members' Research Interests (SRHE 1996) which uses nine headings:

- Student Assessment and Course Evaluation
- Continuing Education
- General (including research, philosophy, history, physical planning)
- Information Technology
- Other

- Staff
- Systems and Institutions
- Students
- Teaching and Learning

The Register includes about 600 names, but only 81 under 'Systems and Institutions' where most of what we define as 'management' research is found. These 81 include non-UK members and 'part-time' researchers who hold managerial rather than academic positions. Thus perhaps only 25-50 people constitute the full-time members of the British academic community concerned with research into HE management. Around this full-time core are a significantly larger number of people with a declared but part-time interest in the field (which includes both authors of this paper).

The discourse of HE management research is therefore populated by academics located for the most part in departments, schools and faculties (in the UK sense of an academic grouping of departments or other basic units) of education (rather than departments of management, policy studies and so on). The orientation to education is reflected in the journals, conferences and other social and epistemological structures which help to define the community. Since departments of education are mostly focused on primary and secondary education, HE academics (and *a fortiori* HE management academics) tend to be isolated in their own institutions. There is a handful of small centres of expertise, notably at the London Institute of Education (Gareth Williams, Ron Barnett and others), but there are only a few departments in the UK which define their main specialism even as education management in a broad sense. It is therefore not surprising that many individual UK academics have forged strong international links, for example with UCLA at Berkeley, and with the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) at the University of Twente in Holland.

The picture of a small group of academics with a specialism in education management, most of them isolated in education departments with other and greater priorities, contrasts starkly with the huge numbers of managers, administrators and policy makers now working in British HE. The small group of HE management academics has tended to pursue lines of inquiry which in the mainstream of the disciplines concerned (such as sociology, organisation studies, policy studies and management) would be regarded as 'traditional', often failing fully to acknowledge new streams of thought and enquiry, such as postmodernism, critical theory and the new public management. For example, Trowler (1997) argues that:

"To date much higher education research has involved casting nets near the surface, exploring the system level and catching the 'public' rather than the 'private' lives of universities ..." (Trowler 1998:147).

However there are significant new entrants to the field of HE management research from two other directions, who are beginning to change or shape these traditions and their discourse.

There has been a growth in interest in HE management as a field of enquiry among established academics in other fields and disciplines, notably management and organisation studies. These 'new entrants' to HE management research have taken HE as a new field for their disciplinary enquiries while remaining oriented to their own discourse. The exchange in the field of organisation studies between Parker and Jary (1995) and Prichard and Willmott (1997) illustrates this, and also how these new entrants to research into HE are among the more radical or critical theorists in their own field. Often these radical theorists suggest major

new directions or areas for management research, as in Sinclair's (1995) analysis of *Sex and the MBA*.

Such academics would not see themselves as 'entrants' to HE management research, since their work is not directed at that audience, and thus tends not to be fully taken up by the HE management research community. These new contributors to research in HE management are either not seeking to change the HE management research discourse, or they are ignoring the established discourse as they provide a critique of and argue for changes in HE management practice. This is an instance of Kogan's (1996) observation that people may use the same theory in different ways, depending on the pull of the client group or area of praxis. Implicit in the contributions of both mainstream and critical theorists from outside the HE management research discourse is the assumption that practice may be directly influenced from or through the general management discourse - without a dialogue with HE management research. Why should such an assumption be made? Either HE management research discourse is silent for such new contributors, or they regard it as powerless - or both.

This also poses questions about the dialogue between the discourses of HE management research and HE management practice, supposedly embedded in such structures as SRHE and its journals, especially Higher Education Quarterly, deliberately aimed at bridging the theory-practice gap. Does the dialogue engage sufficient numbers of HE managers to be powerful in influencing practice? In this respect there is another significant group of 'new entrants', constituted by part-time students of management who are employed in HE. Some of these choose to follow taught postgraduate courses in HE management, but many follow general management courses such as the MBA. In contrast, students on research degrees in HE management tend to be few in number and located in education departments, as would-be apprentices to the small specialist research community.

The number of HE employees studying management has grown not only because the HE system has expanded, but also because the number of managers and administrators in HE has expanded even faster. This disproportionate growth reflects the changes in how the HE service is delivered. This increasingly diverse group of HE workers looks beyond HE for its own reference groups and potential career paths, with a correspondingly broad interest in management study as a route for personal or professional development.

The picture is not however clear-cut. Some new entrants to HE management research writing on the 'new public management', such as Pollitt (1990), deliberately set out to communicate with the HE management research community while remaining embedded in their own discourse community of social policy. This appears however to be a monological rather than dialogical communication (Keenoy et al 1997), again suggesting a power imbalance. The major sites for the development of new public management theory are health, social work and local or national government rather than education, or higher education. Theorising in HE management research has not as yet made a significant impact on the broader discourse of new public management.

These new entrants are beginning, however inadvertently, to challenge the boundaries of the traditional HE management research community. To make sense of these developments we must look on the one hand at the impact of Thatcherism and new public management ideology, and on the other hand at the expansion of HE in the UK and the effects of the rapid shift from elite through mass towards a universal system. The 1980s transformation of public management was accompanied by much of what we have described elsewhere as

'lamentation' (Thorne and Cuthbert 1997). This suggests that the writers may have felt powerless to influence the discourse of policy or practice. Some of this was within the traditional HE management research community (eg Kogan 1989) and some emerged in other disciplinary communities - for example Parker and Jary (1995). Paradoxically, where such mainstream management writing did not communicate with the HE management research literature it symbolised one of the tenets of Thatcherite ideology, that 'business knows best' and that the solution to the problems of the public services was 'management'.

On the other hand mass HE has genuinely broadened the scope of and participation in debates about HE management. A postmodern plurivocality is no longer confinable within the old discourse of (some) academics and (some) policymakers. The introduction of new disciplinary perspectives shows how we might expand the ways we understand HE management in the UK. This mirrors the broader changes in HE itself, to which we now turn:

Locating Discourse: A matter of Discipline or Community?

Management discourses create a particular form of knowledge production and enactment that frames how management is conceptualised and performed (du Gay et al 1996), maintained or recreated and socially embedded in academic disciplines, departments and communities. These institutions construct the discourse and are part of the web that confines or changes it. We have adopted a genealogical approach (Knights 1992, Knights and Morgan 1991) to institutional interpretation as it reflects our view that social developments are often neither linear nor rational. As Foucault (1979:191) suggests : "Institutions and discourses surrounding them often emerge out of a series of accidents, arbitrary or superficial localised events". A genealogical approach does not seek an origin or single source of discourse; instead it tries to see how social discourses have been moulded and reconstituted into a new discursive formation. It is also predicated on illustrating the pattern of social relations and power rather than history, to create understanding: less concerned with the past, it focuses on the present taking a relational rather than a causal view of events.

If we accept the social construction of a web of institutions and discourses and that social actors are free to maintain or reject them, we accept that discourses are neither inherently oppressive nor omnipotent (Giddens 1984). Our interest then focuses on the form these social constructions take. Why are most HE management academics located in education, rather than management departments whilst new public management academics tend to be in public policy units? Why have management academics made relatively little effort to study or establish dialogues with HE managers even though they inhabit the same institutions and often the same profession?

Kogan's (1996) view is that each profession is divided (or in our terms embedded) according to its diverse client groups and activities rather than a theoretical base or discourse - pulled by the client group and praxis to establish a different or mixed peer and reference group. Consequently although both business school and HE academics use the same theories as a sociologist or psychologist, their use and the resultant peer group discourse will be very different. As Geertz (1980) said, any change in academic organisation is a change in 'the way we think about the way we think'. Most academics are not held together by theory, but by a more tenuous and often invisible form of organisation that transcends institutional boundaries - the academic discipline. King and Brownell (1966) describe a discipline as 'a community, a network of communications, a tradition, a particular set of values and beliefs, a domain, a

mode of enquiry, and a conceptual structure' (cited in Becher 1989:20) created and sustained through discourse. Disciplines are social (Whitley 1984), political (Rice 1992:124) and intellectual structures:

... "the attitudes, activities and cognitive styles of groups of academics representing a particular discipline are closely bound up with the characteristics and structures of the knowledge domains with which such groups are professionally concerned. One could venture to suggest that ... the two are so inextricably connected that it is unproductive to try to forge any sharp division between them.

(Becher 1989:20)

Becher drew upon Biglan's (1973a, 1973b) research in the UK and USA to map disciplines on three dimensions: hard v soft ; pure v applied; and life v non-life sciences and two properties divergent v convergent and rural v urban . In these terms management is a soft, applied discipline as lacks a unitary paradigm and concentrates both on design and implementation (Tranfield and Starkey 1997). It is also divergent due to its wide range of perspectives and 'ragged disciplinary boundaries' with rural or broad intellectual territory.

Henkel and Kogan's (1996) work identifies how important the discipline is in establishing academics' professional identity. They regard it as the indestructible core that provides continuity amidst change, and retains the ideals of independent individuals amongst a community of scholars. Even young academics still cleave to this ideal particularly in the old UK universities whilst in the new universities many academics' identities are constructed and embedded in teaching and the institution (Clark 1983). They also argue how the RAE has created a powerful group of academic peers, who have chosen to reinforce the power and discourse of the discipline by disadvantaging those outside the mainstream disciplines (in areas like management) and applied and interdisciplinary work . Although their views are contested they support the earlier findings of Willmott (1994) who argued that the established reward systems fail to reward those outside the disciplines interpreting their work as a defection or unedifying eclecticism. Power resides in the discipline and the discourse of the academic network of peers it embraces.

A discipline is characterised by Becher (1989) in terms of a culture, whose elements include: idols (which we might alternatively label `gurus'); loyalty to norms; tacit knowledge; and rules of conduct. Culture, immensely popular in management in the early 1980s, has only more recently been applied to HE. Martin's (1992) three perspectives on culture provide a powerful analysis of the dominant modes of cultural inquiry. She argued that cultural analysts need to engage all three perspectives to capture the essence of culture. The unitarist perspective assumes that culture is shared and those who do not share the values, behaviours and assumptions are seen as 'deviant'. The differentiated perspective recognises and actively works with sub-cultures that may support, enhance or be in conflict with the dominant organisation culture. The fragmentation perspective sees culture as a more transitory phenomenon where groups come together for particular issues 'as if' they were a culture and then dissolving. This more sophisticated view of culture recognises and reconciles the different voices within and across discourses in more complex and interesting ways. Trowler's (1998) cultural analysis of change in a new university adopts a social constructionist approach located at the discipline and departmental level to reveal how discourse "not only changes the language, but may also result in (and not just reflect) wider structural change" (Trowler 1998:139).

Changes in discourse are not just responses to cultural change but are the cultural change itself and may lead to other forms of change in an interdependent rather than causal relationship. Paradoxically, strong discipline cultures create major benefits but also weaknesses as they may be resistant to change with boundaries that inhibit communication with those outside the culture. Instead of disciplines and cultures Whitley (1984) uses the term 'field', to define an area with 'common explanatory ideals and technical procedures'. or an area of enquiry drawing on different disciplinary perspectives. Management is currently more field than discipline, a reflection of its current stage of evolution, as disciplines evolve, typically from fields, through an intellectual, political and social process.

The current approach of the Higher Education Funding Council for England presumes that disciplines are equivalent to departments - the presumption is illusory. Whilst the RAE and Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) recognise 'units of assessment' (UoA), (a surface acknowledgement that a discipline might have multiple locations in the modern university) when planning assessment visits or exercises the HEFCE mindset is that UoA equals Department. Wherever this is untrue the logistics of identifying panels and arranging visits become extremely difficult. Also wherever academics see themselves as teaching students as well as subjects, the assumption that department equals discipline can be seriously deficient in capturing important organisational realities. Whilst both administrative and academic boundaries are important they may not coincide. Some boundaries are ragged, some clear, some are strong and relatively impervious to penetration from other disciplines, some are weak and open to 'invasion'. What matters, says Becher (1989), is what territory is adjacent to any discipline, and what is seen as common ground. Ryder (1996) draws unflattering parallels between staff in centrally planned economies and UK HE. He describes how academics who spend their life on one institution become acculturated making them parochial, selfish and defensive towards their territory and outsiders.

Academics create cultures like the iron cage of bureaucracy, to provide security and protection. Faculties (groupings of departments and disciplines) tend to be different. Faculties are more likely to be constructed by managers to meet particular institutional needs and aspirations. Universities are renowned for initiating change through the creation of new faculty structures as these changes can be managed more easily than discipline or cultural change. Faculty restructuring may be initiated to reduce the Vice Chancellor's span of control, or to create budgetary groupings but it is often meaningless outside the institution. If departmental boundaries are strong it may be no more than rearranging the 'organisational furniture'. However Becher's argument says faculty adjacency, like disciplinary adjacency, might be crucial. It also helps to identify how HE institutions construct and map knowledge, a process he describes as a 'badly made patchwork quilt'
(Becher 1989:7). Yet as few academics are pressing to change it must be serving a purpose for them. Perhaps it is inherent conservatism. Dearlove (1998) describes how change 'creeps' up on institutions unplanned, often bypassing departments until they need to transform or cut existing structures, which evokes powerful resistance to institutional initiatives such as modularisation.

Academic leaders of disciplines and fields do not necessarily play any part in institutional-level governance, management and leadership. (Middlehurst 1993). This helps to explain why managerialism in HE has provoked such dissent amongst academics. Dearlove (1998:73) describes academics' relationship to management as paradoxical because they "want to govern themselves but they rarely want to manage: they are often poor managers when they

do manage and yet they deny the right of management to others". Academic managers see it differently, using the management discourse of rationality to justify increased management power at institutional level as a reaction to changing external environments and greater need for strategic choice (Cuthbert 1997). Introducing management discourse tends to reduce autonomy. Despite the threat this poses from HE managers to academics, Barnett (1997:34-35) sees the change in discourse positively as new voices are entering the debates and academics can still largely determine their own patterns of work:

"A vocabulary containing, for example, disciplines, interdisciplinarity, understanding, critique and wisdom is slipping away ... because terms such as these and the ideas that they represent are not part of the newly emerging dominant discourse, focused as it is on effective action, on outcomes and on pragmatic responsiveness."

In a similar way Winter (1996) argues that the new HE offers new liberty as well as new discipline for academics. Can we, then, identify new opportunities for educating the HE managers, and perhaps even the academics, within the curricula of management and HE management? And can we reconstrue the relationships in a more compatible way within this newly emerging voice in the discourse? A less appealing alternative is to accept the view that universities are 'high inertia systems' (Dearlove 1998:72) where staff are stuck in a form of departmental and institutional 'aspic' (Ryder 1996).

We have seen how discourse can reveal power relations and how these are embedded through the discourse of disciplines, cultures, departments and faculties. Now we turn briefly to consider the interrelationships and the communication that may exist between academics across discipline boundaries such as that between HE management research and management research and with practice.

Translating the Discourse: Dialogue, Monologue or Silence?

Kuhn (1962) argued for translation between paradigms or disciplines. He distinguishes between translation - understanding another's view while retaining one's own - and going native - being taken over by another's world view. Translation reveals how boundary changes, whether academic, social, political or managerial, occur. HE management research is already translating the discourse of management but not gone native and HE academics, recognising this change have expressed conflicting views on the use of this discourse. Bell (1991:136) expresses guilt at "borrowing perspectives, models, concepts and even theories from the world of industry and commerce", believing it reflects a form of weakness or inadequacy. Glatter (1997:186) takes the opposite view, explaining how translation from management is not a problem for him as he "probably oversimplifies it". Despite a reliance on functionalist perspectives of management he is aware of the move away from the dominant rationalist paradigm. His views of the scale and speed of management discourse translation into education management were apparent at the 1996 British Education Management and Administration Society Conference:

"Clearly the opportunities for educational management conferences to be addressed by non-mainstream speakers are growing so fast that I could have been the last mainstream speaker to a BEMAS conference. Or perhaps our whole definition of mainstream may change...."

(Glatter 1997:181)

As a senior education academic he identified the changes to the discourses and how this has led to the field itself changing as it translates or is colonised by management theory.

HE management has always translated some of HE management theory, but may have recently lost ground to managers' preference for new public management discourse . Rouleau and Seguin (1995) argue strategic thinking as a field (like management) is occupied by a number of differentiated discourses whose coexistence offers scope for collective learning only if there is a dialogue between discourses. Dixon (1997) talks about 'hallways of learning': physical or metaphorical places where multiple perspectives coexist and different discourses can come together to create what Litvin (1997) describes as a 'language of diversity' where difference and diversity are recognised as socially constructed rather than natural and immutable. Often the problem of incommensurability for all management theorists is articulated as the sound of silence. Possible scenarios include: translation in one (monologue) or both (dialogue) directions; participants 'going native' - as managers become academics, or academics become managers or individuals take on 'both roles'; or deafening silence.

Alternatively the choice is between critique - the recognition of alternative frameworks (the academic choice) - and wisdom - the use of alternative ways of understanding (the managerial imperative) (Barnett (1997) distinguishing between research as intellectual and explanatory, and practical (Whitley 1984). Valimaa and Westerheijden (1995:385-6) use discourse to describe different expectations and conflicting views on the purposes and use of research:

"By *research discourse* we mean the intellectual activities and debates based on empirical or theoretical approaches to HE as a phenomenon ... In the *policy discourse* the expectations of the participants (as a rule: decision-makers) are inspired by the instrumental value of knowledge produced by research."

We now adapt Valimaa and Westerheijden's model to map the relationships between the three discourses of management research HE management research, and HE management. Their analysis suggested that the main export from the HE research discourse to the HE policy discourse is concepts and ideas, rather than (as might equally have been supposed) data and findings which reinforce policymakers' instrumental concerns. Our model, presented in Figure 1, pictures how the flow of ideas might happen, to helps us consider what might happen next.

[Figure 1 about here]

Drawing on our earlier genealogical framework and discussion of the differing discourses we argue that the field of traditional public administration, drawing on disciplines such as economics, sociology and politics, but embedded in a discourse with its client group and praxis (Kogan 1996) has become less fashionable (Kieser 1997). Major societal and global changes in public services transcending institutional boundaries have changed the power relationship between public administration and HE management. The discourse of public (HE) administration has faded into a voice not less strident but located in smaller UK academic communities, restricting their access to new and powerful audiences. Their discourse may now appear absurd or irrelevant (Davis 1971) to management researchers who view their own discourse as 'truth' and the discourse of public administration as a forms of dialogical resistance.

New public management discourse appears to lack cohesion: it often embraces the discourse of management, but it is embedded in the praxis and client group of public administration and institutionally located in departments of social policy and business. Its translation for HE management research is like an emergent monologue (Keenoy et al 1997), with little communication. Alongside it is both lamentation and resistance - from within their own community. Whilst some HE academics struggle to retain their distinctive 'culture' against this incursion (Dearlove 1998, Kogan 1996) others use public lamentation as a cathartic device benefiting the vocalist more than for the audience. This limited monologue reflects the established embedded pattern of predominately one-way communication between management research and HE management research in the UK

In contrast multiple interactions exist between HE management research and HE management practice. SRHE is the nexus for the translation of the discourse of HE academics into practice and for academic leaders and managers to discuss their views of practice through a dialogue. However changes to the domain of policy and practice have meant that managerialist pressures from practice to research also require translation. HE research discourse has partly translated this through the discourse of new public management to become more client orientated and fashionable. In this way HE managers can overcome the silence between management research discourse, and HE management practice. Management academics may have less common ground with HE managers than with HE management academics as they are less adjacent in Becher's terms. Despite a continuing flow of seminars and conferences sponsored by the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals and SRHE, the ESRC has resisted designating HE as a field of study for funding. We construe this gap as silence, creating a space in the 'hallway' (Dixon 1997) for mutual learning and benefit. Stronger relationships between the two research communities would enable HE management research to translate management research more effectively, retain its distinctive client and praxis focus and ensure its resistance to 'going native'. This strand of critical discourse is necessary to capture the complexity of the issues (Frost 1997) whilst keeping a dialogue open with practising managers.

Alternatively, HE management research in the UK may become subsumed within the discourse of management research as just another competing voice. If this happened it would need to be supported (or maintained) by major changes in social and institutional practices. Academics would need to relocate to join new communities and cultures of practice to maintain the new discourse, perhaps leading to a decline in the status and prestige of the existing dissemination networks. However the culture embodied in the traditional dialogue between HE management and HE management research, though unfashionable, may provide important resistance against the depredations of (hard) managerialist HE 'vandalism'. Maybe HE managers and management academics should meet in the hallway, instead of relying upon HE management academics to translate their needs in another metaphorical room down the hall. The failure to create a dialogue with practice means that plurivocal and dissenting academic discourse remains *embedded within the academic community* constructing a multiple monologue. It also denies the expertise of managers and their contribution to developing theory and practice. Valimaa and Westerheijden (1995) argue that the domain of HE policy, and by extension in our model, the domain of HE management practice values instrumentalism. For institutional managers the instrumental value of management research may be ensuring the health of the institution. For academics, it might mean continued healthy growth and dynamic disciplines. However as disciplines and institutions are predominately conservative, they may be relatively impervious to new ideas which threaten their own

established boundaries (Jackson 1997:98). Yet if disciplines and fields are being eroded in the new postmodern discourse of HE management (Barnett 1997) then perhaps HE managers and leaders (at every level) will provide the new discourse. Located outside the social embeddedness of the discipline or field, managers may be able to create more radical academic discourse than academics. The final section identifies some of the problems inherent in this proposition and speculates how the differences in UK and American practice can be understood.

Playing The Language Game: Conclusions and Speculations

All of these arguments (including our own) may be an inevitable and elaborate 'language game' or means of professional self-justification (Wittgenstein 1974) where the culture and discourse of an existing community 'linguistically restricts' new research findings to reflect pre-existing categories. This is a powerful device for conservatism within the culture and exclusion from acceptance outside it. As we have seen, academics initially resisted 'management' as an area of study because it was seen as too vocational. Having embraced it they have made it more and more 'academic', embedded it in their own social practices, and thereby created a gulf with practice. In the language game, the field has been made more prestigious by making it more academic.

As the language of business was outside the HE management research culture it was met with discord and resistance in HE, but was more readily accessible for many management researchers. Public sector changes also strengthened the power base of management researchers, by further legitimating and extending their discourse. Many public service managers saw the need to learn management discourse to change their practice (Thorne 1997) and also to enhance their status and career prospects. HE management is different, comprised of many managers who are also academics and who need to retain both academic and managerial legitimacy. They may require a more complex bi-lingual discourse that both embraces management and is suffused with critique to enable them to translate between the cultures of HE managers and academics. Such a discourse would help them achieve the tasks related to their role, whilst maintaining complex sets of relationships. Whilst management discourse dominates, managers of all kinds may play the managerial language game, yet if it is just a fashion the danger lies in becoming outmoded. Perhaps that is why HE management researchers are cautious in translating management discourses: they may be less comfortable than management academics with changes in fashion.

We will now discuss briefly some of the differences in the way that HE management discourse is constructed in North America. Two areas of difference - HE managers' power and the academic culture - are contrasted with an area of common concern - the relationship between theory and practice, to show how similar issues may be interpreted differently. Trow (1998), a global HE guru, uses his experience at the University of California to argue that academic managers have considerably more power in the USA than the UK, as they operate within a non-democratic style of governance and different forms of tenure. The increased power and perhaps resultant status of managers in HE will also influence the weight and funding given to the study of their discourse and praxis. Yet it may also limit the impact of more critical and radical theorists, if this group of managers believe it in their best interests to stifle some of their debates. HE academics also have a different career structure: all staff have equal rights and privileges in the Senate and most assistant professors with tenure become professors. There is also an incentive for HE academics to 'achieve' as the payment systems

are based on 'merit and the market'. So a high profile can lead to higher salary, creating a culture unlike the 'high inertia systems' of the UK universities (Dearlove 1998).

However Huber's (1992) criticisms of the academic culture as 'unbusinesslike' and failing to meet the needs of its clients resonates with those of Bain in the UK. The difference in interpretation stems from the national cultural view of the enterprise spirit. In North America Huber suggests it is 'un-American' to be non entrepreneurial, whilst in the UK business values were only introduced to the public services in the early 1980s so they required a new discourse to maintain them. Thus similar problems are embedded in different cultures, practices and language; in the UK we talk of education *management* whilst North Americans use *administration*.

Burlingame and Harris (1998) describe a revitalisation movement in educational administration in the USA in which leadership is a crucial first step in reframing thinking. They illustrate this process by reference to Greenfield's influence. The contrast with the UK is instructive, as this debate also raged in the UK, but without such far-reaching effects, as no leader or guru emerged to take up the Greenfield baton. The leading figures in HE management research are largely the same group as the leaders of 10 or even 20 years ago. These HE academics also retain control over the presentation (if not the production) of research discourse through the editorship of journals, the selection of articles for publication, student selection and curriculum changes. Whilst conservatism retains their power within the language game of their community, they risk becoming increasingly out of step with the needs of potential clients. Many public sector professionals and managers, who previously studied MEd degrees in management now prefer MBAs (reducing student numbers and resources) as the discourse is seen as more relevant and the qualification more career enhancing. Also as new journals emerge, along with internet conferences, it may be more difficult for those within the existing culture to maintain their power base.

Burlingame and Harris also categorised academics into four groups depending upon their relationships and their values towards practice and prescription. It would be instructive to map the configuration of UK HE academics and compare it to professors of management. Most of the struggles they recount also exist in the UK: within the field and in practice; the failure of key academic journals to relate to practice; social inequalities; and the need for more qualitative research. The US revitalisation movement has begun to reconfigure the relationships of professors, practitioners, knowledge communities and societal values. The prospects for the UK look gloomier as revitalisation appears to be coming from outside the HE field weakening its power in relation to management, suggesting its role may be primarily as a translator, broker and resister of the new dominant discourse.

Our discussion suggests that management is a dominant discourse, sustained by the intervention of Government and other powerful agencies external to HE, and the increasing value placed on management in both public and private sectors. These factors have helped management research to expand in size and scope. Hearn (1996) suggests that the concept of a dominant discourse can help us make sense of other groups or discourses, rather as we have interpreted some of the developments in HE management research as a monological translation from management research. Our review of management research also supports Hearn's thesis that dominant discourse is fraught with discord, manifested by resistance or silence within the field. There is also a lesson for HE management research in the way that the introspective HE-oriented power struggle between academic discourses in management has created a gulf between research and practice. Management research has failed to deliver for

business, where gurus have filled the vacuum, but has nevertheless attempted to colonise public services management.

Finally we focus on the prospects for HE management research. In seeking revitalisation we do not seek consensus. We disagree with Pfeffer's (1993) view that for effective dialogue between theory and practice there must be consensus. On the contrary, in a postmodern era the quest for consensus may be no more than nostalgia. It may be more helpful for theory and practice alike to accept that a 'rich narrative' may not exist or be needed for an enlightened debate. For a stimulus to such debate, perhaps we should look to HE's middle and junior managers. They have the potential scale and scope to contribute to revitalisation, for example by triggering transformation in HE management education and training programmes.

HE managers are embedded in the discourses in different ways. They are inside the discourse of practice but may be inside or outside the HE management research discourse. The question is which discourse predominates. Perhaps in elite institutions the discourse of traditional HE management research will remain relevant. But in many 'new HE' contexts disciplinary boundaries are breaking down to meet client needs and the traditional HE management research discourse is potentially less relevant. If HE managers are to contribute to developing new or revitalised discourse then they may need to find a new authentic voice, that gives them legitimacy and power over the discourse's key elements such as journals and conferences. There may be a need for gurus to reconstruct the discourse. A UK precedent for this is polytechnic directors such as George Brosan, Eric Robinson and John Stoddart, who shaped polytechnic development by speaking directly to practitioners in both institutional management and policy making, and dominating the discourse of polytechnic management and the associated research field.

Alternatively, a revitalised research discourse might reframe practice. In particular, it might help to support HE managers as they move into new locations such as virtual universities, worldwide electronic publishing and major institutional reconfiguration and change. New HE management research, by providing new and multiple interpretations, could facilitate the embedding of HE management in different practices and communities, in a way which ensure a continuing healthy dialogue between theory and practice.

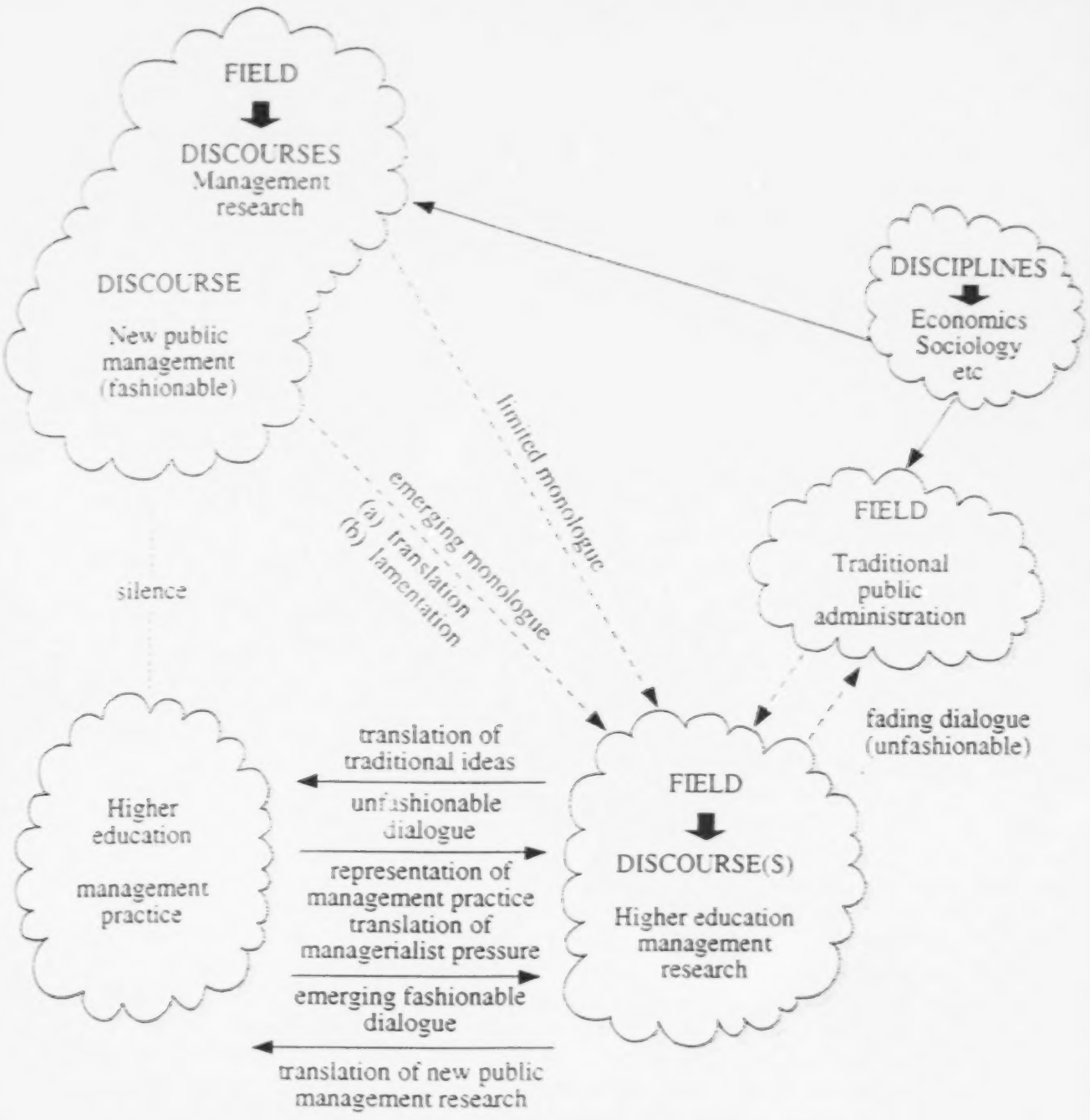

Figure 1. A model of Relationships between Management Research, HE Management Research, and HE Management Practice

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